

Message Text

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72

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7432

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

INFO USINT DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USINT BAGHDAD

USMISSION GENEVA

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

EO 11652: NA DECON 4/17/75

TAGS: PFOR EG UR

SUBJ: NEW RECRUITS IN BEIRUT PRESS DEFEND SOVIETS AGAINST
EGYPTIAN ALLEGATIONS

REF: BEIRUT 4409 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: SOVIET PROPAGANDA COUNTER-OFFENSIVE AGAINST
SADAT AND GOE CONTINUES IN BEIRUT PRESS, AND PRO-MOSCOW
ORGANS ARE NOW BEING JOINED BY LIBYAN AND
IRAQ-BACKED PAPERS IN DEFENDING USSR'S ROLE IN OCT
WAR AND CHARGING ANTI-SOVIET COLLUSION ON PART OF
EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA AND USG. END SUMMARY.

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1. NOTEWORTHY (AND SOMEWHAT SURPRISING) DEVELOPMENT

IN CONTINUING HEATED EGYPTIAN-SOVIET "DIALOGUE" OCCURRED HERE APR 17, WITH PUBLICATION BY LIBYAN-FINANCED DAIL AS SAFIR OF LENGTHY ARTICLE DEFENDING SOVS AGAINST SADAT'S CHARGES OF RUSSIAN DUPLICITY AND LUKEWARM SUPPORT DURING OCT WAR. QUOTING FROM "DOCUMENTS" PURPORTING TO RECORD CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN SOV AMB VINOGRADOV AND GOE OFFICIALS, PAPER CLAIMED THAT SAD TOLD SOVS ON OCT 4 THAT ANOTHER WAR WITH ISRAEL WAS "INEVITABLE" BUT DID NOT MENTION ANY DATE. SOVS REPORTEDLY REPLIED THAT WHILE "DECISION TO FIGHT WAS EGYPT'S, USSR WOULD MEET ALL ITS COMMITMENTS AND SUPPORT ARAB RIGHT WITH ALL ITS POLITICAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC MEANS."

2. ACCORDING TO SAFIR'S "DOCUMENTS," VINOGRADOV INFORMED SADAT ON OCT 6, FOLLOWING EGYPTIAN SEIZURE OF LARGE PORTIONS OF CANAL'S EAST BANK, THAT SARG PRES ASSAD HAD ADVISED SOV LEADERSHIP SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE OCT 5 OF COMING SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN OFFENSIVE AND HAD ASKED USSR TO ARRANGE QUICK CEASEFIRE 48 HOURS AFTER HOSTILITIES BEGAN "BECAUSE SITUATION WOULD THEN BE IN ARABS' FAVOR." VINOGRADOV SAYS HE ASKED SADAT FOR HIS OPINION RE SARG REQ, AND SADAT REPLIED IT WAS TOO EARLY TO THINK OF CEASEFIRE AND THAT HE WOULD CONTACT ASSAD TO DISSUADE HIM ON OCT 7, ACCORDING TO SAFIR, VINOGRADOV--NOTING THAT MILITARY SITUATION ON BOTH FRONTS WAS "EXCELLENT"--TOLD SADAT THAT ASSAD HAD REITERATED HIS REQ FOR CEASEFIRE TO SOVS, BUT SADAT AGAIN REPLIED THAT HE WOULD TALK ASSAD OUT OF REQUESTING CEASEFIRE. ON OCT 9, AS RESULT OF ISRAELI CONCENTRATION AGAINST SYRIA AND LACK OF FURTHER PROGRESS ON SUEZ FRONT, VINOGRADOV CLAIMS HE SUGGESTED TO SADAT THAT "THINGS HAD BEGUN TO RUN AGAINST ARAB FORCES" AND NOTED THAT ASSAD HAD FOR THIRD TIME ASKED SOVS TO ARRANGE IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE. VINOGRADOV, ACCORDING TO SAFIR'S "DOCUMENTS," RECORDS THAT SADAT AGAIN REFUSED TO ACCEPT THIS IDEA, SAYING SITUATION WOULD IMPROVE AFTER ENTRY OF IRAQI FORCES INTO SYRIA AND EGYPTIANS HAD ACHIEVED FURTHER SUCCESSES ON SINAI FRONT. WHEN VINOGRADOV ASKED SADAT WHAT EGYPT'S PRECISE WAR AIMS WERE, SADAT ALLEGEDLY REPLIED THEY WERE TO "ALTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BALANCE OF PWER...AND ACTIVATE THE CRISIS." VINOGRADOV SAYS HE OPINED THAT THESE AIMS HAD ALREADY BEEN REALIZED AND THAT EARLY CEASEFIRE THUS SEEMED MOST OPPORTUNE, BUT SADAT REJOINED THAT HE WANTED EXPLOIT EGYPTIAN GAINS TO MAXIMUM AND RECAPTURE SINAI PASSES. "DOCUMENTS" THEN QUOTE VINOGRADOV RECORDING THAT DEVELOPMENT OF FURTHER EGYPTIAN OFFENSIVE WAS UNHAPPILY DELAYED AND THAT BY TIME KOSYGIN VISITED CAIRO ON OCT 16, ISRAELIS

HAD CARRIED OUT THEIR THRUST WEST OF CANAL.

3. "ON OCT 20," VINOGRADOV IS QUOTED IN DOCUMENTS PUBLISHED BY SAFIR, "SADAT ASKED ME TO SEND URGENT MESSAGE TO BREZHNEV REQUESTING SOV INTERVENTION TO ARRANGE FOR IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE." BY THAT TIME, NOTED SOV AMB, HE HAD LEARNED SARG NO LONGER FAVORED CEASEFIRE BECAUSE IT WAS PLANNING COUNTER-OFFENSIVE ON GOLAN FRONT. "BREZHNEV ASSURED ME," VINOGRADOV WENT ON, "THAT USSR HAD ALREADY ORDERED PARTIAL MOBILIZATION OF SOV ARMED FORCES AND HAD PREPARED SEVEN BATTALIONS TO GO TO EGYPT'S AID. IN FACT, SOME OF THESE BATTALIONS HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO ARRIVE IN CAIRO." VINOGRADOV THEN RECOUNTED EVENTS OF SUBSEQUENT DAYS, REFERRING TO SOV THREAT TO INTERVENE UNILATERALLY AND TO CONTACTS WITH USG TO ARRANGE CEASEFIRE ON OCT 20. HE ALSO WROTE THAT USSR "TOOK SOME SERIOUS DECISIONS BETWEEN FEB 23 AND 25 WHICH EGYPTIAN LEADERSHIP KNOWS PERFECTLY WELL, BUT WHICH CANNOT BE DISCLOSED NOW." WITHOUT GIVING FURTHER DETAILS, VINOGRADOV SAID THESE DECISIONS WERE ENOUGH TO PROVE TO ARABS HOW MUCH SOVS HAD DONE IN SUPPORT OF "ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENTS."

4. AT SAME TIME, LEBANESE COMMUNIST PARTY WEEKLY AL AKHBAR (APR 13) HAS TAKEN TO INVEIGHING AGAINST EGYPTIAN-SAUDI-AMERICAN DEFAMATION CAMPAIGN AGAINST USSR, NOTING THAT IT GATHERS STEAM DESPITE ROARING OF GUNS ON GOLAN FRONT AND DESPITE ISRAEL'S INCREASING INTRANSIGENCE RE WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. AKHBAR CLAIMED THAT SADAT'S COOPERATION WITH USG IS PART OF AMERICAN PLAN TO ISOLATE SYRIA AND IMPROVE EGYPTIAN-JORDANIAN RELATIONS IN ORDER TO FULFILL KING HUSSEIN'S AMBITIONS TO REGAIN WEST BANK. IT NOTED THAT SADAT HAD MADE NO EFFORT TO EXTRACT RECOGNITION OF PLO AS SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF PALESTINIANS FROM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HUSSEIN, WHO "KNOWS HOW TO USE AMERICA'S SUPPORT IN DEALING WITH ARABS WHO TODAY SEEK US FRIENDSHIP AND PIN THEIR HOPES ON IT IN VIOLATION OF THEIR PREVIOUS PLEDGES OF AMITY WITH USSR AND ENMITY TOWARD US."

5. ON APR 15, LEFTIST WEEKLY AL DUSTOUR (FREQUENTLY PRO-CHINESE BUT ALSO BOLSTERED WITH IRAQI FUNDS) PUBLISHED WHAT IT DESCRIBED AS OUR SECRET SAUDI DOCUMENTS EXPOSING KING FEISAL'S IGNOBLE ROLE IN 1967 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR, EVENTS OF 1970 IN JORDAN AND CIVIL WAR IN YEMEN. ONE DOCUMENT PURPORTS TO BE SECRET LETTER FROM FEISAL TO PRES JOHNSON DATED DEC 27, 1966, IN WHICH KING REVIEWED
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